

ABSTRACT

5       Viral proteins derived from an enterically  
transmitted non-A/non-B viral hepatitis agent (HEV)  
are disclosed. In one embodiment, the protein is  
immunologically reactive with antibodies present in  
individuals infected with the viral hepatitis agent.  
This protein is useful in a diagnostic method for  
10       detecting infection by the enterically transmitted  
agent. Specific epitopes have been identified that  
are reactive with sera of individual infected with  
different strains of HEV. Also disclosed are DNA  
probes derived from a cloned sequence of the viral  
15       agent. These probes are useful for identifying and  
sequencing the entire viral agent and for assaying the  
presence of the viral agent in an infected sample, by  
using probe-specific amplification of virus-derived  
DNA fragments.